

# Soils, Plants, Wildlife & Fish

## Plants

The vegetation pattern found within the Mohawk area is largely the result of several decades of timber management and the checkerboard ownership pattern (Mohawk/McGowan Watershed Analysis, 1995). Despite heavy harvesting activities, mature forest areas remain as scarce remnants scattered throughout the public lands. Special areas have been identified where fragile, sensitive, rare, unique or endangered plant species or communities are located. You can help protect these special areas and promote a healthy ecosystem by using only signed and mapped trails managed for recreational trail use.

Invasive plant species are not natural to this ecosystem. These plants are often referred to as weeds. Some are poisonous, spread rapidly, and can out-compete native plants for light and water rapidly degrading ecosystem values. Seeds from weeds can spread far and wide after temporarily lodging in vehicles before finding a spot to take hold and grow. The spread of invasive plants can be reduced by thoroughly washing your equipment before leaving home or other infested sites.



## Soils

Soils in the Mohawk Valley are the end result of processes that formed the Western Cascade Mountain Range — volcanic eruptions, crustal plate movement, lava and ash deposits, and more recently, glaciation and erosion. Forty million years of such activity led to development of fine textured, reddish-brown, clay-rich soils common in the Mohawk area. These soils are easily displaced and can be damaged if used inappropriately. Efforts to limit and control soil erosion and displacement are an on-going priority in order to meet standards necessary to keep trails in usable condition. Temporary trail closures and/or trail rerouting may be encountered; please be patient and understanding. To assure a continuous and pleasurable riding experience, stay on mapped trails, observe and respect closure and maintenance signs, and TREAD LIGHTLY!

## Wildlife

A wide variety of wildlife species inhabit the Mohawk area. Remember, this area is their home seven days a week and you are a visitor. If you see wildlife from the trail, please slow your vehicle and keep the noise down as you advance. This will allow you to enjoy wildlife while minimizing disturbance to them. Never chase nor harass any animal. Remaining on signed and mapped trails is an important way you can help protect wildlife. Encourage members of your party and others you encounter in the area to do the same. Thank you for being a responsible partner in protecting wildlife.

## Fish

Many species of fish reside or spawn in the Mohawk Valley stream systems. Cutthroat and rainbow trout are found in all streams within the Shotgun OHV Trail System. Steelhead trout and the spring-run chinook salmon historically used the lower portions of the larger streams. The greatest concern linked to area fish populations is the loss or destruction of habitat. Signed trails are maintained with regard to protecting fish habitat. Your help is needed to assure continued presence of trout and other fish within the Mohawk Valley stream systems. Please stay on signed and mapped trails.

